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ABSTRACT

This text gives an overview of distance education for students, administrators, and practitioners in distance education. Chapter 1 discusses the study of distance education. Chapter 2 analyzes forms of nonconventional education (open, nontraditional) that may have similarities to distance education but are not to be identified with it. Chapter 3 defines distance education in a way that identifies it and isolates it from other forms of education. Chapters 4-6 attempt a detailed analysis of the theoretical approaches formulated to date and classifies them into three groupings: theories of autonomy and independence, industrialization, and interaction and communication. Chapter 7 examines distance education in the light of a generally accepted theory of education to see whether it is possible or contradictory to speak of teaching at a distance or of learning at a distance. Chapter 8 discusses some existing classifications that contain elements that contribute to an understanding of the field and then suggests a new typology of distance teaching systems. Chapter 9 focuses on planning distance systems. Chapter 10 presents and then analyzes studies in order to put together certain economic indicators on the costs of distance education. Chapter 11 proposes a four-point evaluation scheme of effectiveness based on the quantity, quality, status, and relative cost of learning achieved. Five case studies are presented. Chapter 12 draws conclusions. An index is appended. (YLB)

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